Malachi
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Malachi

Chapter 1

A pronouncement: The word of G OD to Israel through Malachi.
I have shown you love, said G OD. But you ask, “How have You shown us love?” After all—declares G OD —Esau is Jacob’s brother; yet I have accepted Jacob
and have rejected Esau. I have made his hills a desolation, his territory a home for beasts a a home for beasts Meaning of Heb. uncertain. of the desert.
If Edom thinks, “Though crushed, we can build the ruins again,” thus said G OD of Hosts: They may build, but I will tear down. And so they shall be known as the region of wickedness, the people damned forever of G OD.
Your eyes shall behold it, and you shall declare, “Great is G OD beyond the borders of Israel!”
A son should honor his father, and a slave b slave Septuagint and Targum add “should reverence”; cf. next part of verse. his master. Now if I were a father, where would be the honor due Me? And if I were a master, where would be the reverence due Me?—said G OD of Hosts to you, O priests who scorn My name. But you ask, “How have we scorned Your name?”
You offer defiled food on My altar. But you ask, “How have we defiled You?” c You Septuagint “it.” By saying, “G OD ’s table can be treated with scorn.”
When you present a blind animal for sacrifice—it doesn’t matter! When you present a lame or sick one—it doesn’t matter! Just offer it to your governor: Will he accept you? Will he show you favor?—said G OD of Hosts.
And now implore the favor of God! Will compassion be shown to us? This is what you have done—will any of you be accepted? G OD of Hosts has said: If only you would lock My doors, and not kindle fire on My altar to no purpose! I take no pleasure in you—said G OD of Hosts—and I will accept no offering from you.
For from where the sun rises to where it sets, My name is honored among the nations, and everywhere incense and pure oblation are offered to My name; for My name is honored among the nations—said G OD of Hosts.
But you profane it when you say, “The table of the Sovereign is defiled and the meat, d meat Meaning of Heb. uncertain. the food, can be treated with scorn.”
You say, “Oh, what a bother!” And so you degrade e degrade Meaning of Heb. uncertain. it—said G OD of Hosts—and you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; and you offer such as an oblation. Will I accept it from you?—said G OD.
A curse on the cheat who has an [unblemished] male in the flock, but vows and sacrifices a blemished animal to the Sovereign! For I am an emperor—said G OD of Hosts—and My name is revered among the nations.

Chapter 2

And now, O priests, this charge is for you:

Unless you obey and unless you lay it to heart, and do honor to My name—
said G OD of Hosts—I will send a curse and turn your blessings into
curses. (Indeed, I have turned them into curses, because you do not lay
it to heart.)
I will put your seed under a ban, a put your seed under a ban Meaning of
Heb. uncertain. and I will strew dung upon your faces, the dung of your
festal sacrifices, and you shall be carried out to its [heap].
Know, then, that I have sent this charge to you that My covenant with
Levi may endure—said G OD of Hosts.
I had with him a covenant of life and well-being, which I gave to him,
and of reverence, which he showed Me. For he stood in awe of My name.
b See Hag. 2.10–13; cf. Lev. 10.8–11; Deut. 33.8, 10. Proper rulings were
in his mouth, And nothing perverse was on his lips; He served Me with
complete loyalty And held the many back from iniquity.
For the lips of a priest guard knowledge, And rulings are sought from his
mouth; c For the lips of a priest guard knowledge, / And rulings are
sought from his mouth Or "For the lips of a priest are observed; /
Knowledge and ruling are sought from his mouth." For he is a messenger of
G OD of Hosts.
But you have turned away from that course: You have made the many stumble
through your rulings; d through your rulings By ruling falsely that an
act was licit or an object ritually pure. you have corrupted the covenant
of the Levites—said G OD of Hosts.
And I, in turn, have made you despicable and vile in the eyes of all the
people, because you disregard My ways and show partiality in your
rulings.
Have we not all one Father? e Have we not all one Father I.e., are we not
members of the same household—and thus reliant upon each other? Or
"father," namely Jacob; cf. Ibn Ezra, Kimhi. Did not one God create us?
Why do we break faith with one another, profaning the covenant of our
ancestors?
Judah has broken faith; abhorrent things have been done in Israel and in
Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned what is holy to, and desired by, G OD —
and espoused daughters of alien gods.
May G OD leave to any man who has done this no descendants f no
descendants Meaning of Heb. uncertain. dwelling in the tents of Jacob and
presenting offerings to G OD of Hosts.
And this you do as well: g as well Lit. "a second time"; Septuagint reads
"that I detest"; cf. v. 16. You cover the altar of G OD with tears,
weeping, and moaning, so that [God] refuses to regard the oblation
anymore and to accept what you offer. h what you offer Lit. "from your
hand."
But you ask, "Because of what?" Because G OD is a witness between you and
the wife of your youth with whom you have broken faith, though she is
your partner and covenanted spouse.
Did not the One make [all,] so that all remaining life-breath is that
One's? And what does that One seek but godly folk? So be careful of your
life-breath, i so that all remaining life-breath … careful of your life-
breath Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and let no one break faith with the
wife of his youth.
For I detest divorce—said the E TERNAL, the God of Israel—and covering
oneself with lawlessness as with a garment j and covering … with a
garment Meaning of Heb. uncertain. —said G OD of Hosts. So be careful of
your life-breath and do not act treacherously.
You have wearied G OD with your talk. But you ask, "By what have we done
so?" By saying, "All who do evil are good in the sight of G OD, who
delights in them," or else, "Where is the God of justice?"

Chapter 3

Behold, I am sending My messenger to clear the way before Me, and the Sovereign you seek shall come to the temple suddenly. As for the angel of the covenant a angel of the covenant Apparently the messenger of the previous sentence is regarded as Israel's tutelary angel. that you desire, he is already coming.
But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can hold out when he appears? For he is like a smelter's fire and like fuller's lye.
He shall act b act Lit. "sit." like a smelter and purger of silver; and he shall purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they shall present offerings in righteousness.
Then the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to G OD as in the days of yore and in the years of old.
But [first] I will step forward to contend against you, and I will act as a relentless accuser against those who have no fear of Me: Who practice sorcery, who commit adultery, who swear falsely, who cheat laborers of their hire, and who subvert [the cause of] the widow, orphan, and stranger, said G OD of Hosts.
c Vv. 6–12 resume the thought of 1.2–5. For I am G OD —I have not changed; and you are the children of Jacob—you have not ceased to be. From the very days of your ancestors you have turned away from My laws and have not observed them. Turn back to Me, and I will turn back to you—said G OD of Hosts. But you ask, "How shall we turn back?"
Ought mortals to defraud d defraud Heb. qaba', a play on the name of Jacob (v. 6); cf. Gen. 27.36. God? Yet you are defrauding Me. And you ask, "How have we been defrauding You?" In tithe and contribution. e In tithe and contribution I.e., the contributions to the priests from the new grain, oil, and wine; see Num. 18.12.
You are suffering under a curse, yet you go on defrauding Me—the whole nation of you.
Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, f storehouse I.e., the public storehouse; see Neh. 13.10–13. and let there be food in My House, and thus put Me to the test—said G OD of Hosts. I will surely open the floodgates of the sky for you and pour down blessings on you;
and I will banish the locusts g locusts Lit. "devourer." from you, so that they will not destroy the yield of your soil; and your vines in the field shall no longer miscarry—said G OD of Hosts.
And all the nations shall account you happy, for you shall be the most desired of lands—said G OD of Hosts.
You have spoken hard words against Me—said G OD. But you ask, "What have we been saying among ourselves against You?"
You have said, "It is useless to serve God. What have we gained by keeping God's charge and walking in abject awe of G OD of Hosts?
And so, we account the arrogant happy: they have indeed done evil and endured; they have indeed dared God and escaped."
In this vein have those who revere G OD been talking to one another. G OD has heard and noted it, and a scroll of remembrance has been written at God's behest concerning those who revere G OD and esteem the holy name.
And on the day that I am preparing, said G OD of Hosts, they shall be My treasured possession; I will be tender toward them as a man h a man I.e., a stereotypical householder. is tender toward a son who ministers to him.
And you shall come to see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between those who have served God and those who have not.
For lo! That day is at hand, burning like an oven. All the arrogant and all the doers of evil shall be straw, and the day that is coming—said G OD of Hosts—shall burn them to ashes and leave of them neither stock nor boughs.
But for you who revere My name a sun of victory shall rise to bring healing. i to bring healing Lit. "with healing in the folds of its garments"; in contrast to others "with healing in its wings." You shall go forth and stamp like stall-fed calves,

and you shall trample the wicked to a pulp, for they shall be dust beneath your feet on the day that I am preparing—said G OD of Hosts.
Be mindful of the Teaching of My servant Moses, whom I charged at Horeb with laws and rules for all Israel.
Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of G OD.
He shall reconcile parents with children and children with their parents, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction. Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of G OD.